

# California Department of Conservation 2004-07 Watershed Coordinator Grant Program



*Western Shasta RCD's Lower Clear Creek Watershed  
Floodway Rehabilitation Project receives the Governor's  
2006 Environmental and Economic Leadership Award*

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California Bay-Delta Authority  
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## Summary of Grant Program

The Watershed Coordinator Grant Program (WCGP) was established by the Legislature in the Budget Act of 2000 to fund watershed coordinator positions throughout the state. The purpose of the program was to improve impaired watersheds throughout California by providing support for watershed improvement efforts at a local level. Under this \$2 million pilot program, the Department of Conservation (DOC) awarded grants to Resource Conservation Districts to hire coordinators to work on 30 impaired watersheds across the state.

This highly successful two-year pilot program demonstrated that watershed coordinators are very effective and extremely valuable. By facilitating collaboration among diverse stakeholders across the watershed, coordinators were able to build coalitions for watershed work with hundreds of partners including government agencies, non-profit organizations, businesses, landowners, and individuals. In addition to building consensus, the coordinators contributed significantly to the success of many other state programs including the CALFED Watershed Program, CDFA noxious weed programs, CDFFP fire safe programs, and DFG salmon enhancement programs. Using a coordinated, local approach to watershed planning and management resulted in highly successful and sustainable watershed improvements.

Recognizing the value of the program and its contribution to meeting CALFED Watershed Program goals, the CALFED Bay-Delta Program provided \$1 million in 2003, and \$9 million in 2004 to continue the program within the CALFED Solution Area through June 30, 2007. The grants were expanded to include non-profit organizations and local governments.

Currently, the WCGP provides funding for 48 grants and 60 watershed coordinator positions throughout the Bay-Delta System. An infrastructure of highly experienced and established coordinators are currently implementing watershed improvement projects and helping to meet CALFED Program objectives.



*Watershed Coordinator, DFG staff, and volunteers collecting samples for World Water Monitoring Day on Bear Creek, Shasta County.*

The WCGP is among the few state grant programs that require grantees to provide performance measures and a work plan, which outlines goals, objectives, and specific tasks to be undertaken to complete the work plan. Grantees are also required to provide quarterly and annual accounting of how these measures are being met. The grantee reports are reviewed by DOC staff and compiled



into comprehensive reports, which cover all of the grants. Under the program, recipients of these highly competitive grants have worked to bring together environmental groups, agricultural landowners, and local governments to cooperate on projects that benefit water quality, stream restoration, fire safety, and other local watershed issues.

This report covers the period from the start of the current grant program in spring 2004 through March 31, 2006. Information received from the grantees has been reviewed by the DOC staff and is presented in this annual report. Also included in this report is a table, which summarizes the total amount of additional watershed project funding requested and obtained through the efforts of the coordinators since the start of the current grant program.

As the Additional Funding Table shows, the coordinators have secured almost **\$33 million** in additional watershed funding since the start of the grants in spring 2004. This additional funding is the result of grant writing and fund-raising activities conducted by the coordinators. Coordinators wrote proposals requesting a total of over \$127 million for additional watershed work. **The \$33 million obtained by the coordinators represents a 26% funding success rate.** Most of this funding is designated for watershed projects and does not provide funding for coordinator positions to conduct these projects.

The grantee reports are summarized as individual fact sheets and are listed alphabetically by grantee name. For each grant, the watershed background, benefits to the watershed, benefits to the CALFED Program, and performance measures are listed. Please refer to the individual fact sheets for details.

In addition to their main coordination activities, we are pleased to report that since the beginning of the grant in spring of 2004, the watershed coordinators have worked in 38 counties and collaborated with 35 cities and multiple partners to complete 181 on-the-ground projects thus far. These projects have included:

- ◆ Water-quality monitoring projects, involving partner agencies and citizen volunteers.
- ◆ Restoration projects including bank stabilizations, fish ladder installations, and barrier removals.
- ◆ Creating and completing watershed assessments or planning documents.
- ◆ Conducting workshop and training sessions for landowners and residents on a range of conservation issues including water monitoring, non-native invasive species removal, and the agricultural waiver program.



*Willow planting on the Eight Mile Valley Meadow Restoration Project, Lake County.*

- ◆ Helping to establish new watershed stakeholder groups.
- ◆ Conducting on-going outreach events at public venues such as schools, fairs, and community events, focusing on educating the public about local watershed issues.
- ◆ Organizing watershed clean-up events, resulting in the removal of tons of trash from local watersheds and involving dozens of community volunteers.
- ◆ Conducting watershed tours for local stakeholders, legislative staff, school groups, and partner agencies.
- ◆ Publishing numerous watershed reports, brochures, flyers, newsletters, and press releases.

Watershed coordinators have built extensive networks of partnerships among community stakeholders and have facilitated collaborative decision-making between diverse private and public entities. They have developed an understanding of issues relevant to their local watersheds and have become an important resource to their communities. Coordinators build coalitions for watershed improvements, obtain funds for those improvements, carry out projects, and educate residents on how to best manage and care for their watersheds.

As part of the management of the grant program, the DOC staff maintains regular contact with the watershed coordinators and conducts field visits to monitor progress on work plans and program objectives. Throughout the state, coordinators have confirmed that the program fulfills a great need. Coordinators are able to reduce duplicative efforts, leverage resources, build collaborative partnerships, and encourage local stakeholder participation. Since the program's inception, local citizen involvement has grown immensely. Coordinators



*Community watershed clean-up event along the San Joaquin River.*

have been successful in energizing their communities and getting more people involved, as evidenced by the most recent quarter where several new watershed groups were established and numerous clean-up events were conducted. Residents have developed a sense of ownership and look to their coordinators for guidance. Watershed coordinators have provided that leadership.

Several of the coordinators have been involved in the program for over three years. It has taken time to integrate themselves into the community, develop relationships, and establish a reputation for being reliable and getting things done. Over a period of years, the coordinators have developed an understanding of the watershed and how to best address local issues. After many years of

persistent effort, momentum has grown and progress has accelerated dramatically. Coordinators are now expanding their efforts into sub-watersheds and adjacent watersheds.

For example, a group of coordinators worked together to form CABY, a regional effort to address issues related to the Cosumnes, American, Bear and Yuba Rivers. Long-term coordinators provide stability and enable groups to work together to track and address complex problems over a period of time.

Moreover, many of coordinators have been involved in multiple long-term projects that take years to coordinate and implement. The coordinator for the Upper Cache Creek Watershed spent years working with the Scott's Creek Watershed Council, BLM, the County, Forest Service, NRCS, and local students to implement a gully restoration project, which consists of 16 acres. The site had been a significant contributor of nutrient laden sediment to Clear Lake. The coordinator was involved in researching and selecting the project design, negotiating the contract, working with the contractors on site, conducting education outreach, and monitoring the project's long term viability. This is only one of many projects that the coordinator is involved with at any given time. The project was the culmination of many years of effort and could not have been completed without the coordinator's involvement during the entire project.

The WCGP is the only grant program that funds watershed coordinator positions. The watershed coordinators have been extremely successful in securing additional watershed funding; however, the majority of this funding is designated for specific watershed projects, not positions. Without support from the WCGP, most organizations will not be able to sustain or maintain their coordinators. Not only would it impact the organization's ability to function, but also it would severely reduce the number of future projects in the watershed and the amount of funding coming into the area. Coordinators have been very effective in getting diverse



*Lower Stoney Creek Watershed Tour,  
Glenn County.*

stakeholders to cooperate and work together. In many cases, it has taken years to establish this network. The loss of the coordinator would be highly detrimental and could result in a breakdown of cooperation among watershed groups, government entities, and stakeholders. Coordinators have often stated that they have finally established momentum within the watershed and that this progress would end if they were not present. The WCGP fulfills a need for which there is no other funding. Both field visits and progress reports indicate that the program is effective in delivering results. Coordinators who have worked in their watershed for the past 3-5 years are the most successful. These coordinators are highly experienced, well established in their community, understand local dynamics, and have built trust and strong relationships with multiple stakeholders



and partners. Losing well-established coordinators would be devastating and would erase much of the gain made over the past six years.

In fact, many coordinators have reported that their skills are in such high demand and their efforts so successful that there is a great need for a second coordinator to work on management plans and projects within the watershed. This clearly illustrates the program's effectiveness and success. Demand for coordinators is great and many impaired watersheds would greatly benefit from having one or more designated coordinators.

Watershed coordinators are crucial for the success of watershed improvements. Prior to the WCGP, relatively few of the state's watersheds had watershed coordinator positions identified and funded. For those few, results had been impressive, and those that were subsequently funded by the WCGP have been extremely successful. As the program has progressed, it has become increasingly apparent that watershed coordinators are vital for facilitating collaboration, building consensus, increasing stakeholder awareness, obtaining project funding, and initiating watershed improvement projects. Coordinators are building the watershed management infrastructure necessary for healthy watersheds statewide.

The WCGP is a critical component of an overall strategy for watershed management in California, and should not be viewed independently. A statewide study of watershed partnerships conducted by the Resources Agency and the State Water Resources Control Board found that a key gap in watershed management was in building the local capacity to develop and implement projects. The WCGP provides the resources for a watershed coordinator so that the community can collaborate and cooperate to successfully plan and implement projects. Without a permanently funded and dedicated watershed coordinator, the community would lose and the watershed would suffer. It is important to provide support for this program to insure that essential watershed improvements are continued statewide.

**Table 1: Additional Funding Requested/Awarded to Date**

<b>Grantee Name</b>	<b>Cumulative Requested</b>	<b>Cumulative Awarded</b>
Alpine County	\$1,624,442.68	\$170,183.00
Arroyo Seco Foundation	\$3,582,181.00	\$0.00
Battle Creek Watershed Conservancy	\$700,870.00	\$655,470.00
Butte County RCD	\$3,306,564.00	\$187,367.00
Central Modoc RCD	\$1,695,261.00	\$333,558.00
Central Sierra RC&D	\$2,885,587.00	\$242,200.00
Chowchilla-Red Top RCD	\$486,480.00	\$33,850.00
Coastal San Luis RCD	\$2,829,662.00	\$1,171,543.00
Colusa County RCD	\$515,134.00	\$185,114.00
Contra Costa Public Works Department	\$975,487.00	\$399,705.00
Contra Costa RCD	\$251,961.00	\$152,566.00
Dear Creek Watershed Conservancy	\$999,320.00	\$839,320.00
Earth Resource Foundation	\$128,400.00	\$106,400.00
East Merced RCD	\$4,228,109.00	\$2,400,300.00
El Dorado Irrigation District	\$2,457,500.00	\$527,500.00
Fall River RCD	\$311,582.00	\$311,582.00
Friends of Deer Creek	\$6,648,791.00	\$37,335.00
Georgetown Divide RCD	\$865,493.00	\$880,193.00
Glenn County RCD	\$2,400,000.00	\$0.00
Los Angeles & San Gabriel Rivers Watershed Council	\$282,157.00	\$136,747.00
Mariposa County RCD	\$514,500.00	\$2,776,382.00
Mojave Desert / Mountain RC&D	\$2,528,480.92	\$6,121.49
Mountains Recreation and Conservancy Authority	\$28,192,860.00	\$335,667.00
Napa County RCD	\$4,987,204.00	\$1,687,926.00
Nevada County RCD	\$1,856,322.00	\$10,350.00
Placer County RCD	\$1,118,875.00	\$1,174,575.00
RCD of the Santa Monica Mountains	\$2,896,029.00	\$613,412.00
Sacramento Area Flood Control Agency	\$1,537,523.00	\$157,523.00
San Francisquito Creek JPA	\$5,749,840.00	\$3,907,056.00
San Joaquin County RCD	\$3,125,004.00	\$1,379,500.00
San Joaquin River Parkway and Conservation Trust	\$1,280,668.00	\$450,400.00
Santa Barbara County Water Agency	\$361,000.00	\$80,000.00
Sierra Valley RCD	\$850,680.00	\$850,680.00
Sloughhouse RCD	\$229,247.00	\$53,550.00
Solano RCD	\$4,787,211.00	\$619,425.00
Sonoma Ecology Center	\$5,640,619.00	\$591,793.00
Stockton East Water District	\$1,096,194.00	\$0.00
Tehama County RCD	\$1,223,162.00	\$128,342.00
Upper Putah Creek Stewardship	\$559,032.00	\$39,300.00
Upper Sacramento River Exchange	\$1,426,462.00	\$308,885.00
Urban Watershed Project	\$50,000.00	\$0.00

**Table 1: Additional Funding Requested/Awarded to Date**  
Continued

<b>Grantee Name</b>	<b>Cumulative Requested</b>	<b>Cumulative Awarded</b>
Western Shasta RCD (Sac-Upper Clear)	\$4,601,061.00	\$0.00
Western Shasta RCD (Upper Cow-Battle)	\$8,028,099.97	\$5,697,104.00
Westside RCD	\$575,000.00	\$58,500.00
Yolo County RCD (Lower Cache)	\$1,613,481.00	\$727,219.00
Yolo County RCD (Lower Sacramento)	\$2,857,958.94	\$1,054,535.94
Yuba County RCD	\$1,414,143.00	\$910,452.00
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$127,035,256.51</b>	<b>\$32,743,406.43</b>



